

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 18, 2015

TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FROM: T&ES STAFF

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM # 3 – ITEMS FOR CONSENT

ISSUE: Staff update to Transportation Commission on various ongoing projects.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission receive the items for consent.

A. FUNDING UPDATE

The Washington Area Metropolitan Transit Authority (WMATA) continues to hold meetings to discuss the proposed FY 2016 Operating and Capital Budgets, which were proposed in December 2014, and modified since. After receiving adverse comments regarding service cuts and fare increases, WMATA staff developed a proposal in which jurisdictional subsidies were brought down \$35.5 million from the General Manager's original proposal, without employing service cuts or fare increases. Thus there are no WMATA service cuts for Alexandria. This proposal employs using \$5.5 million in savings by funding fewer additional bus operators and through paying lower fuel costs than originally forecast. WMATA also found \$5 million in cost savings through administrative cuts. WMATA is also directing that \$5 million of funds coming from the closed THIF (joint development) fund be used for WMATA operations this year. Finally, since WMATA is not spending capital funds at the rate it was projecting in December, \$20 million has been removed from WMATA's capital request for FY2016. This proposal was approved by the Board on February 26th, 2015. WMATA will be holding a public hearing on some fairly minor changes in April, 2015. WMATA is likely to be examining possible State of Good Operations bus changes at hearings which will occur in July, 2015.

WMATA continues to hold discussions with regional funding partners to determine the language and funding amount which should be contained within a regional Comprehensive Funding Agreement (CFA). Jurisdictional staff is awaiting more information from WMATA.

The Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) has developed an initial set of FY 2015 and FY 2016 recommendations for funding 70% projects. Two of Alexandria's projects, the Potomac Yard Metrorail station and the West End

Transitway received the second and third highest ratings of all NVT A 70% projects during this set of evaluations. Implementing Transit Signal Priority (TSP) on Duke Street was also recommended for funding. The NVT A Board considered these recommendations at its meeting on February 26, 2015, and approved a set of projects to be considered at a 5:30 PM public hearing on March 25, 2015 at the NVT A offices. Comments can now be filed by the general public on the NVT A web site. The NVT A Board also approved the CMAQ-RSTP program for FY2021. Following is the program which was adopted by the NVT A Board and passed on to the Commonwealth Transportation Board for their review, and inclusion in the State's Six Year Transportation Plan:

NVT A 2021 CMAQ-RSTP Program for Alexandria

Project	Funding Amount	Type of Funding
Bike Sharing Initiative	\$350,000	CMAQ
Community Outreach	\$600,000	CMAQ
Transportation Demand Management	\$600,000	CMAQ
Transitway Enhancements	\$450,000	CMAQ
Bus Shelters	\$600,000	CMAQ
Parking Technologies	\$400,000	RSTP
Transportation Master Plan	\$500,000	RSTP
New Electronic Payment Program	\$100,000	RSTP
TOTAL	\$3,600,000	

VDOT staff began developing proposals for a rating system for major projects funded by Commonwealth funds as prescribed by HB2. Proposals for the rating system have been developed, but are still under review. Since the rating system is not yet complete, no Alexandria projects have been rated.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia passed HB1877 in their last session, which will provide an additional \$40 million annually for transit capital statewide. This should permit the Department of Rail and Public Transit (DRPT) to provide slightly higher shares of state capital assistance, in the next set of Commonwealth transit capital grants, which should assist Alexandria. HB1877 also specifies that all funds being allocated from the Transportation Trust Fund must fall into three categories. This bill prioritizes State of Good Repair as the largest recipient of state funds (45%). The bill further assigns 27.5% to projects receiving good ratings from the HB2 rating process. The final set of funds (27.5%) provides funds for projects which were determined by each VDOT construction district.

The General Assembly also passed legislation which permits Transportation Network Companies such as Uber and Lyft to operate, but sets a set of conditions for legal operation. These are the following:

- Drive Screening
- Insurance Requirements

- Wheelchair access
- Vehicles must be registered with the Department of Motor Vehicles

B. METROWAY (ROUTE 1)

Staff is continuing to work on implementing additional elements including real-time bus arrival information. Installation of the real time arrival signs has been delayed due to the cold weather but should be completed by the middle of March. Ridership continues to hold steady, and is expected to grow with the opening of new multi-family buildings in Potomac Yard and the completion of Arlington's portion of the Crystal City Potomac Yard Transitway.

Phase 2 of the Transitway is scheduled to open in the spring of 2015 when the dedicated lanes from the Arlington County line to the Crystal City Metrorail Station are complete.

Background: During the first round of TIGER grants, the City received \$8.5 million to design and construct the Route 1 Transitway between Monroe Avenue and East Glebe Road. The City compiled additional grant funding and \$5.2 million in local funding to design/construct various elements of the Transitway project. The total cost of the Transitway including vehicles is approximately \$20 million.

For more information on the Route 1 Transitway project please see visit:
<http://www.alexandriava.gov/tes/info/default.aspx?id=58644>

C. POTOMAC YARD METORAIL STATION EIS

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) is nearing completion. The document has been submitted to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the National Park Service (NPS) for legal sufficiency review. The document will be released to the public once FTA and NPS are satisfied that it meets their requirements. Staff have begun briefing civic associations as well as City boards and commissions in anticipation of the document's release. Once the document has been released for public review and comment, the Potomac Yard Metrorail Implementation Work Group (PYMIG) will host three Community Open Houses to provide additional information on the details of the DEIS. Staff will release its recommendation approximately one month before City Council votes for the preferred alternative. During this period boards and commissions will be asked to comment on the elements of the recommendation within their purview, and a public hearing will be held. Opportunities for comment on the DEIS will include two public hearings and the opportunity for written comment.

Background: The Potomac Yard Metrorail Station project is an infill Metrorail station located between the National Airport and Braddock Road Metrorail stations on the Blue and Yellow lines in the vicinity of the Potomac Yard Development.

For more information on the project, please visit www.alexandriava.gov/potomacyard.

D. WEST END TRANSITWAY (WET)

The Project Team is reviewing the Draft Alternatives Analysis Report and continuing work to develop the Environmental Assessment documentation. The ongoing work

includes refining capital and operating costs, development and review of conceptual engineering documents, and coordination with internal and external stakeholders.

Technical work for the West End Transitway will be completed by Summer 2015; endorsement by City Commissions and adoption of a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) by City Council is scheduled for Fall / Winter 2015.

Background: In December 2013, the City kicked off an Alternatives Analysis / Environmental Assessment (AA/EA) for the West End Transitway (also referred to as Corridor C) as part of the Federal NEPA Process. The AA/EA will analyze and refine the alignment as defined by the CWG and City Council and to identify any impacts and potential mitigation associated with the recommended alternative. The study is partially funded by a grant from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and is the first step towards applying for a federal Small Starts grant for project design and construction.

For more information on the West End Transitway, please visit:
<http://www.alexandriava.gov/westendtransitway>

E.DASH TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Staff from the City (TES-Transit Services), DASH, and WMATA have been meeting with Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) to provide feedback and technical resources needed to produce a Transit Development Plan (TDP) for the City. To date, staff has reviewed the Project Schedule, Chapter 1 – Overview of the Transit System, Chapter 2 – Goals, Objectives, & Standards, Chapter 3 – Service and System Evaluation, and Chapter 4 – Service Expansion Projects. Once the Draft TDP is prepared, City staff will schedule a briefing for the Transportation Commission.

Background: The City of Alexandria is required by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) to prepare a six-year Transit Development Plan (TDP). DRPT is funding the study and managing the Consultant Team hired to create the TDP. The TDP provides an overview of all transit services in the City, policy guidance for capital and operating investments by the City, and is a pre-requisite to applying for any capital, operating, and technical assistance from DRPT. Upon completion and approval, the City is responsible for providing an Annual Update to DRPT.

F.OLD TOWN AREA PARKING STUDY

The OTAPS Work Group was reconvened in 2015 to review parking meter restrictions and Old Town residential parking policies. At the first meeting in January 2015, the Work Group reviewed results of the 2014 Old Town parking occupancy study. At the February meeting, the Work Group reviewed parking meter restrictions in Old Town, parking meter occupancy trends, and discussed tools to best manage parking in Old Town metered areas. At the next OTAPS Work Group meeting on March 25th, the Work Group review meter restriction policy approaches, and begin to discuss Old Town Residential Permit Parking Policies.

Background: The Old Town Area Parking Study (OTAPS) Work Group was formed to develop consensus on strategies identified by the Waterfront Small Area Plan and recommendations from the 2009 Old Town Area Parking Study. The final 2012 OTAPS

report was submitted to Council in February 2013, and reports are posted online at alexandriava.gov/ParkingStudies.

G.OAKVILLE TRIANGLE/ROUTE 1 CORRIDOR PLAN

The project Advisory Group has been reviewing aspects related to land use, open space, height, and architecture. Meanwhile, staff is identifying potential transportation mitigation improvements, and conducting traffic analysis and preparing cost estimates related to the transportation improvements. The developer consultant will begin modeling the existing conditions using the VISSIM micro-simulation model. A community meeting was held on March 12, 2015 to show various concepts for the Mt. Jefferson Park and trail. The next Advisory Group meeting will be held on March 26, 2015 at 7 PM at Charles Houston Recreation Center.

Background: City Council directed staff to begin a planning effort that includes Oakville Triangle and adjacent properties as well as the Route 1 corridor north and south of the site. A community Advisory Group was established to assist in developing Plan principles for the site regarding potential land uses, open space, sustainability, transportation and connectivity, and potential community benefits, among other topics. The corridor study will review features such as streetscaping, undergrounding of utilities, and potential redevelopment sites along the western portion of Route 1. The corridor study will help to establish a unified streetscape for Route 1 and an integrated approach to potential redevelopment along Route 1.